



# PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



October 8, 2018

Good afternoon.

It is a short week for students and many of our faculty, as fall break brings us to the halfway point in the semester. Balloons are in the air and fall seems to have officially arrived in the form of cooler weather and changing foliage.

## Recognizing Indigenous Peoples' Day

Today, we join with many other municipalities and institutions of higher learning that recognize today as Indigenous Peoples' Day, on which we honor our Native and indigenous students, faculty and staff. Last March, our Board of Regents unanimously voted to add Indigenous Peoples' Day to the University Calendar. I was proud to approve the change to [Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual - Policy 3405: Holidays](#). As the policy now reads, [Indigenous Peoples' Day](#) is meant to bring awareness to the struggles of Indigenous People, honor all they bring to UNM through their culture, language, arts, and knowledge, and recognize the University campuses as being located on their ancestral land. It also recognizes the importance of diversity and UNM's dedication to equity and inclusion. New Mexico is home to 24 Indian tribes, which represent about 10 percent of our state's overall population. While on my statewide listening tour, I met with several of these communities, heard from dozens of tribal leaders and agreed with the need to increase engagement between UNM and New Mexico's indigenous population.

## Regarding the Zimmerman Murals

As Interim Provost Rich Wood said in his communiqué last week, we are committed to creating a path forward in regard to the [Kenneth Adams Murals in the historic west end of Zimmerman Library](#). During the past year, a dedicated task force has cultivated proposals to address the murals, which have been acknowledged as both historic and contentious. A short-term recommendation will be presented to the Regents Historic Preservation Committee next week, and through careful consideration and planning, we can all look forward to seeing a long-term solution in place.

## Prioritizing Veterans for UNM jobs

Since arriving at UNM, it has been one of my top priorities to make UNM a more veteran-friendly campus. To that end, Human Resources has launched the [Veteran Preference Program](#). Through UNMJobs, the program gives additional consideration to qualified veterans seeking staff positions on campus. This opens the door wider to those who have served our country in various capacities and thereby bring unique skills and knowledge from their valuable experiences. The program joins a list of initiatives now in place to help our student and staff veterans, including Green Zone Training and the newly created veteran-focused advisor position.

## Ombuds Services a Valuable Campus Resource

The American Bar Association recently named Oct. 11 as [Ombuds Day](#). In honor of the occasion, I would like to recognize the great work being done by the UNM [Ombuds Services for Staff](#), which serves our campus through providing confidential informal dispute resolution for UNM employees. Conflict is inevitable in an organization as large as ours, and it is important to offer alternatives that focus on people and recognize the value of effective forms of communication. In honor of the occasion, Ombuds Services is having a [Staff Open House](#) on Oct. 11 from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. in the Ombuds Office (Building 29).

## Sarah Belle Brown Award Extended

The date for [nominations](#) for the 2018 Sarah Belle Brown Community Service Award has been extended through Monday, Oct. 18. The award recognizes faculty, staff and students who have demonstrated extraordinary commitment to community service by volunteering their time and talents. If you know someone who selflessly gives back to our communities, please take the time to nominate them before the deadline.

Have a great week and a safe fall break, and let's go Lobos!

Garnett S. Stokes  
President

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